U.S. Department of Justice

Office of Justice Programs

Bureau of Justice Statistics

NOTICE

The **reduction of hate crime** is an important national priority. Current statutory reporting requirements categorize hate crimes as offenses motivated by a bias against a person's race, religion, sexual orientation, disability, ethnicity, or national origin. Bias-motivated crime is devastating not only because of its impact on victims but also because of its polarizing effect on communities.

Anecdotal and statistical evidence suggests that hate crime is under-reported, leading to difficulties in understanding and combating the problem. The Office of Justice Programs and its offices and bureaus and the Office of Community Oriented Policing Services want to encourage jurisdictions receiving Federal grant funds to take measures to improve hate crime reporting.

Improved reporting must be in place to determine which bias-motivated crimes are increasing or decreasing in number. Law enforcement agencies that improve their hate crime data collection can better gauge the nature of the problem and the effects of prevention efforts.

Since the Hate Crime Statistics Act of 1990 (28 USC 534) was implemented, the FBI has served as the central repository of bias-motivated crime data. The Act encourages city, county, and State law enforcement agencies to report to the Uniform Crime Reporting (UCR) program. Individual agencies or State UCR programs using personal computers for data collection and storage may submit bias-motivated crime data in hard copy form or on floppy disks. Agencies participating in the National Incident-Based Reporting System (NIBRS) are able to include the hate crime data element in their regular submission of data to the FBI without any additional processing burden.

If you have any questions, or would like more information, please feel free to contact Maryvictoria Pyne, Unit Chief of the Communications Unit of the FBI's Criminal Justice Information Services Division (CJIS) at 304/625-4995.

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Advice to grantees concerning the expenditure of federal funds for information systems

Effective crime-fighting efforts require cooperation among the components of the criminal justice system: law enforcement, courts, prosecutors, public defenders, corrections officers, and probation and parole officers. One way to foster cooperation is to enable the components to share criminal justice information across local, State and Federal information systems.

The Office of Community Oriented Policing Services (COPS), the Office of Justice Programs (OJP) and its five bureaus – The National Institute of Justice, the Bureau of Justice Statistics, the Bureau of Justice Assistance, the Office of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention, and the Office of Victims of Crime – assist State and local governments through grant programs designed to foster partnerships among law enforcement and criminal justice agencies nationwide. As part of their crime-fighting missions, COPS and OJP and its bureaus recognize the need to assist State and local governments in developing capabilities for sharing criminal justice information.

As law enforcement and criminal justice agencies integrate information architectures, it is important to consider existing information-sharing standards. In support of this goal OJP and COPS encourage State and local jurisdictions and law enforcement and criminal justice agencies that receive Federal funds to implement information systems that are compatible with the National Incident-Based Reporting System (NIBRS), the National Crime Information Center (NCIC-2000), the National Instant Criminal Background Check System (NICS), and the Interstate Automated Fingerprint Identification System (IAFIS). These systems have been developed with the guidance of the FBI Criminal Justice Information Services (CJIS) Advisory Policy Board, and they provide the latest generation of crime reporting, including hate crime, and access to on-line warrants and criminal history records.

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Many major grant programs authorize equipment purchases, generally including hardware and software. As a recipient of funding through COPS or OJP or one of its bureaus, you should be aware that additional information about OJP grant programs is available at OJP's Internet site:
http://www.ojp.usdoj.gov.

Your agency's current assistance from OJP may or may not include expenditures for information or records management systems. If you have scheduled such expenditures, for greater inter-operability we urge you to meet FBI standards contained in the criminal justice information systems previously mentioned (NIBRS, NCIC-2000, NICS and IAFIS). Examples are police records management systems, integrated law enforcement systems, court records systems, automated fingerprint identification systems, data communication networks, custom computer software for law enforcement officers, firearms background check systems, sex offender registries, and protection order registries. The attachment explains where your agency can obtain copies of the standards applicable to these systems.

When preparing your application for Federal funding during FY 2001, even for grants from Federal departments other than the Department of Justice, you are urged to seek funding for information system architectures that take into account existing FBI standards. For example, local law enforcement agencies may be eligible for reimbursement of expenses associated with the use, development, and support of information technology to reduce drug-related crime in public and Indian housing under the Housing and Urban Development program 14,854, Public and Indian Housing Drug Elimination Program.

ATTACHMENT

The requirements for compatibility with NIBRS are described in the following manuals available on the Internet at **http://www.fbi.gov/publish/nibrs/nibrs.htm:**

Uniform Crime Reporting, National Incident-Based Reporting System
> *Volume 1 - Data Collection Guidelines*
> *Volume 2 - Data Submission Specifications*
> *Volume 3 - Error Message Manual*

To obtain a printed copy of these documents, call the FBI toll free at 1-888-UCR-NIBR.

Information on NCIC-2000 and related systems can be found on the FBI Internet site at **http://www.fbi.gov/library/2000/pdfinfo.htm.** Five newsletters describe NCIC-2000 and its activities.

When the agencies have met the State's standards, access to the NCIC systems will be provided to local agencies through their respective State. To obtain the standards for your State, contact the State agency where the standards reside. Please contact the FBI's System Transition Unit at (304) 625-2730 for more information on accessing NCIC systems.

The Systems Transition Unit is also the point of contact for all IAFIS questions. A list of the FBI Certified Products that support the IAFIS standards can be found at the FBI Internet site at: **http://www.fbi.gov/programs/iafis/cert.htm.**

Information about Department of Justice funding assistance that can potentially be used for information systems is also available on the Internet at: **http://www.ojp.usdoj.gov/** (click on "Publications," "Funding Opportunities," or "What's New" for information on "Guidelines, Solicitations, and Application Kits"). For more information, call the Department of Justice Response Center at 1-800-421-6770. Within the Washington, D.C. area, call (202) 307-1480.

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